responsibility of fixing quality norms for food products rests with Prevention of Food Adulteration Act under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Increasing sugarcane price

1889. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the price of sugar has been increased recently whereas the price of sugarcane has not been increased proportionately; and

(b) if so, the details of Government's policy in his regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The open market price of sugar is influenced by market forces of demand and supply whereas the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) for sugarcane payableby sugar mills to sugarcane growers for each sugar season is fixed by the Government on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) having regard to factors like cost of production of sugarcane, return to the grower from alternative crops, etc. The Government's policy is to ensure availability of sugar at reasonable price to the consumers and to ensure to sugarcane growers remunerative minimum price for sugarcane.

Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal

1890. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Competent Authority has taken any measures of security against the dangerously/chemically affected surroundings and campus soil of the Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the above chemically affected plant premises are open and accessible to the general public;

(d) if so, the action taken to protect the public from health hazards of the plant premises; and

(e) whether the Competent Authority has taken any action on the report submitted by the Bhopal Commission on the environmental/industrial aspect of the Bhopal Gas leak from the Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As per information made available by Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, the Madhya Pradesh Government has taken suitable measures to secure the dangerously/chemically affected surroundings and campus soil of the Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal. Hazardous material like tarry residue (46.50MT), contaminated soil (127 MT) and semi-processed pesticides (18.40 MT) have been collected and separately stored in four halls/sheds in the factory premises.

The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has entrusted the work of planning the methodology of removal of toxic wastes and preparing the cost estimates of Engineers India Limited.

(c) and (d) Security guards have been appointed by the State Government to provide round the clock security to protect the general public from health hazards of the plant premises.

(e) Bhopal Commission, an NGO is reported to have submitted a report to the State Government in April, 2002. As the Government is already providing adequate help to the gas victims through relief and rehabilitation measures, it is felt that no useful purpose would be served by organizing a conference/workshop as suggested by the Commission.

India's rank in world countries

1891. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRIMATI S.G INDIRA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that a new environment sustainability index produced by a team of environment experts at Yale and Columbia Universities and released at the World Economic Forum in Davos has ranked India as one of the worst polluters rating her at 101 of 146 countries in respect of air pollution, biodiversity, quality and adequacy of potable water supply and green house gas emissions;